

TRIBUTE TO ROBERT W. WALSH

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 20, 1997

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Robert W. Walsh, the executive director of the 14th Street, Union Square Business Improvement District [BID/LDC], and the man responsible for the renaissance of a New York neighborhood desperately in need of amelioration. Robert will be leaving New York for Charlotte, NC, where he has been named president of the Charlotte, NC, Uptown Development Corp.

During his 8 year tenure at BID/LDC, Robert initiated and oversaw a revitalization of the Union Square community that has transformed the neighborhood into one that is immeasurably better for residents, businesses, and visitors. In fact, improvement in the neighborhood has been so vast, Mayor Rudolph Guliani recently singled out the 14th Street, Union Square organizations as models for community development.

Robert has been responsible for many notable projects in the community, including the rezoning of the East 14th Street corridor which has stimulated recent developments such as an NYU student residence, many new retailers, restaurants, and other businesses; and the establishment of an award winning public/private partnership with Washington Irving High School. One of Robert's most indelible marks on the neighborhood is the completion of the Genesis apartments, a 94-unit building for formerly homeless families.

During Mr. Walsh's tenure, the 14th Street, Union Square neighborhood has become one of the most attractive and exciting areas of New York City.

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure today to rise in honor of Robert Walsh, a man who has served the New York community throughout his career at a variety of city agencies—the New York City Departments of General Services, Personnel, Parks and Recreation, Transportation, and the major's Office of Operations. I ask my colleagues to join with me today in this well-deserved tribute to Mr. Walsh for his commitment to New York City and to the outstanding work he has done for the 14th Street, Union Square community.

TRIBUTE TO VENA G. EDWARDS

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 20, 1997

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, after 32 years of civilian service in the Department of the Army, Vena G. Edwards is being honored by her friends and peers.

Vena began her long and distinguished career in 1965 in the Officer Personnel Management Directorate at the U.S. Army Personnel Command, then known as the Military Personnel Command. Once she had established herself through other assignments, she advanced to the office of the assistant deputy chief of staff for Personnel in February 1977. A professional in every sense of the word, she was the mainstay and guiding force for the entire

agency. She has trained many other agency members and has successfully managed the careers of the many general officers for whom she worked.

She always took a genuine interest in people and often went out of her way to help. You could say that she was truly one of those people who always walked the extra mile. She has been a lifesaver for many a general officer and hapless newcomer who found out they could always depend on Vena for the right answer or the right place. As the institutional memory for the organization, she will be sorely missed as it will take all of us much longer to look up what she already knows.

A master of efficiency, she has worked tirelessly to ensure the agency goals are met and that a quality of life is maintained for all members of the U.S. Army.

Vena has earned the admiration and respect from those in the highest levels of the Army, of the Department of Defense, Congress, and for the genuine caring for the well being of those who make soldiering their career.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to extend our heartfelt congratulations upon the retirement of Vena Edwards. I know Vena will be just as successful in her future endeavors as she was at the Department of the Army.

BART EXTENSION OF THE SAN FRANCISCO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT IS ESSENTIAL

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 20, 1997

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the reauthorization of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act [ISTEA]. Bipartisan passage of ISTEA in 1991 unveiled a new era in transportation funding by establishing a critical balance between meeting national policy objectives and providing flexibility to States and local governments. ISTEA works well and major changes to this important law are not necessary.

Mr. Speaker, last week, I testified before the House Subcommittee on Surface Transportation in support of ISTEA reauthorization. ISTEA must maintain its focus on national priorities, intermodalism, local and public involvement, and consideration of environmental concerns. It must also be adequately funded.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to share my thoughts with my colleagues here in the House of Representatives on the effectiveness of ISTEA programs in my region and in support of the reauthorization of the BART Extension to San Francisco International Airport. I respectfully request that my statement be included in the RECORD.

STATEMENT OF CONGRESSMAN TOM LANTOS
BEFORE THE HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE ON SURFACE TRANSPORTATION

Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify on what is one of the most significant issues before the 105th Congress: the reauthorization of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA). Passage of ISTEA by a large bipartisan majority of the Congress in 1991 was a watershed event for federal trans-

portation policy. As you know, the new law was designed to make federal programs in the post-interstate era better, not bigger, by emphasizing system preservation, the efficient operation of existing networks, improved intermodal integration, and increased state and local control over investment decisions. ISTEA has been a visionary document, fostering a more diversified and strengthened transportation infrastructure to enable Americans to meet future challenges and opportunities.

A key ISTEA provision for the San Francisco Bay Area is the Section 3 New Rail Starts authorization for the BART Extension to the San Francisco International Airport. As you know, the BART Extension was authorized in the last authorization of ISTEA and I strongly urge its reauthorization. The project, which is located in my Congressional district, will dramatically improve mobility and alleviate traffic congestion by creating a state-of-the-art connection between the 81-mile BART system and the bustling San Francisco International Airport (SFO). The SFO Extension enjoys the unanimous support of the entire Bay Area Congressional delegation and I am wholeheartedly committed to ensuring that we build this long-awaited, national-significant transit project. In a few minutes, BART Board Director Dan Richard will elaborate on the region's reauthorization request for the SFO Extension.

In the San Francisco Bay Area, I am happy to report, that the overall implementation of ISTEA has had a profound and decidedly beneficial impact on transportation planning and project selection. Thanks to the superb guidance and leadership of our nine-county Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), which has overseen implementation of the program, our region has been able to seize upon the new opportunities provided by ISTEA and immediately put our federal dollars to work.

Barely one month after the passage of ISTEA, MTC formed the Bay Area Partnership—a consortium of local, state and federal agencies—to collaborate on the optimum use of ISTEA dollars. The Partnership quickly initiated a process to screen and rank project proposals based on ISTEA goals for efficiency, equity and multi-modalism. Working by consensus engendered strong local support, which enabled the Bay Area to obligate nearly 200 of its first round of Surface Transportation Program (STP) and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Improvement Program projects years ahead of official obligation deadlines.

In terms of the MTC region, ISTEA's flexible funding provisions have been pivotal to the program's success. ISTEA has literally revolutionized the way transportation priorities are set and how projects are selected for funding in the Bay Area. Instead of the rigid funding categories of the past, Bay Area communities have the latitude to invest in smaller, more cost-effective projects that deliver more immediate results.

Local flexibility has also enabled many worthy projects to advance—everything from a joint intermodal terminal at the Port of Oakland to BART rail rehabilitations to expansion of MIC's popular roving Freeway Service Patrol tow trucks and various highway and local street improvements throughout the region. In all, MTC, with the Partnership's help, has approved 432 projects worth more than \$460 million in STP and CMAQ funds. Along the way, the process continues to be refined and improved to elevate only the most efficient, effective transportation projects for funding. The success of each of these transportation projects is an extraordinary testament to the value of local decision-making coupled with the inherent flexibility of ISTEA.